

*Jennifer Stock:* You're listening to Ocean Currents, a podcast brought to you by NOAA's Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary. This radio program was originally broadcast on KWMR in Point Reyes Station, California. Thanks for listening!

(Music)

*Jennifer Stock:* Welcome to another edition of Ocean Currents, the first of 2013! I'm your host, Jennifer Stock, and on this show we talk with scientists, educators, explorers, policy makers, ocean enthusiasts, adventurers and more, all uncovering and learning about the mysterious and vital part of our planet, the blue ocean. I bring this show to you monthly on KWMR from NOAA's Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, one of four National Marine Sanctuaries in California, all working to protect unique and biologically diverse ecosystems. Cordell Bank is located just offshore of the KWMR listening radius, right off the Marin-Sonoma coast, and it is a thriving area with ocean life above and below the surface.

So, Happy New Year! I realized that this is the eighth year of this program. So thanks for tuning in, and I hope you'll continue to listen in. So I've got a very busy show today for you. We're going to jump around a little bit in topics, but I wanted to start off the New Year with some terminology clarification - a vocabulary lesson perhaps. Marine National Monument, Marine Reserve, National Marine Sanctuary, Marine Protected Area. What's the difference between all of these Marine Protected Areas?

Lauren Wenzel from the National Marine Protected Areas Center will join us to get us up to speed. Following Lauren, we'll focus on the most recent announcement about the effort to expand the Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries up the Sonoma coast with Sanctuary Superintendent Dan Howard. We'll learn about what's going on there. It's a really exciting opportunity happening now. And last we'll close the show today honoring Rich Stallcup for his numerous contributions to the Sanctuaries. We'll be talking with Shannon Lyday, a friend of his. So it's a busy show. We'll be right back to dive in. Stay with us.

(Ocean sounds)

*Jennifer Stock:* Welcome back. You're tuned to Ocean Currents, and we're going to start off this first segment just talking a little bit about some of the definitions of the different types of Marine Protected Areas that we have in our nation. Marine Protected Areas have been put in

place over the past several decades to work towards conserving vital marine habitats and resources. There are over 1,600 Federal, State, and Territory Protected Areas today. National Park, National Marine Sanctuary, some of these terms you may have heard. So we're going to talk a little bit about what some of the similarities are, what some of the differences are about these Marine Protected Areas.

Live on the air we have Lauren Wenzel joining us today from the National Marine Protected Areas Center. Lauren, are you with us?

*Lauren Wenzel:* Yes, thank you Jenny.

*Jennifer Stock:* Welcome! You're live on the air.

*Lauren Wenzel:* Great!

*Jennifer Stock:* Thanks for calling in. So let's just do a quick start-off. Can you just give us some background on what is the National Marine Protected Areas Center?

*Lauren Wenzel:* Sure. So the National Marine Protected Area Center is part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and we also work very closely with the Department of the Interior and with other Marine Protected Area programs. And we were created in the year 2000 because there were so many Marine Protected Areas around the country, but nobody was looking at the big picture of how these Marine Protected Areas related to each other, and where they all were, and what they did. So our job is to look across all of those different programs and give people the big picture of what we have in the ocean and what kind of jobs we're doing protecting it.

*Jennifer Stock:* That's a lot to catch up on in terms of the amount of Marine Protected Areas that we have right now. How has it been to kind of get up to speed since the designation of the Center, to get everybody together on the same page?

*Lauren Wenzel:* Well it's a challenge as you said. You know, the terminology around Marine Protected Area confuses a lot of people and that's some of the work that we've done. I'd say two of the main pieces of work we've done over the past two years has been creating an inventory so we actually know what's out there in the ocean. We can go to one place and see where all the Protected Areas are, and another major piece has been doing some work on terminology to

try to help people get on the same page and be talking in the same language when we talk about Protected Areas.

*Jennifer Stock:* Speaking of which, that's what I wanted to spend a little bit of time with, with this terminology. Towards the end of 2012, there was quite a bit of good news in reporting about what's happening in the ocean and there was a lot of confusion, I think, in some of the terms. You know, most recently the Marine National Monument term versus the National Marine Sanctuaries, and I'm wondering if you can clarify, what is a Marine National Monument?

*Lauren Wenzel:* Well, maybe I'll back up just for a second and talk about what a Marine Protected Area is first.

*Jennifer Stock:* Sure.

*Lauren Wenzel:* And then I can get into the different kinds. But a Marine Protected Area is a general term that means any place in the ocean or even the Great Lakes that's protected, and, so it's more protected inside than outside is a simple way of thinking about it. And there're many different kinds of Marine Protected Areas and they're established under different legal authorities, and the two that you mentioned - the National Marine Sanctuaries, and the National Monuments - are just two of the authorities that are used to establish federally managed MPAs.

*Jennifer Stock:* What's the different authority used for a Marine National Monument vs. National Marine Sanctuary?

*Lauren Wenzel:* Right, well the Monument is a really interesting one because it is established under the Antiquities Act of 1906, and that Act was signed by Teddy Roosevelt, who of course is considered to be the father of conservation in the US, and it was established because people were looting on Indian lands, and there was a lot of concern about these great pieces of American heritage being lost. And so one of the reasons, or the great powers of the Antiquities Act is that they give the President the authority without Congress being involved, to single-handedly go ahead and protect an area. And the reason for that is because immediate action was needed. So that's one tool that has been very useful for protecting areas, both on land and in the water, over the past century.

The National Marine Sanctuaries Act is more recent, it was passed in 1972, and it really reflects a different perspective on how we go about protecting areas in the ocean. It provides tools for a lot more public participation, and it is much more specific about the kinds

of management that is authorized onto that Act. Both of them are very useful tools, both of them can be used to protect areas in the ocean - they just go about it in different ways.

*Jennifer Stock:* Is there any advantage in terms of public input or public process to either one of those?

*Lauren Wenzel:* I think the National Marine Sanctuaries Act provides more opportunities for public input, and that is one of the advantages of it is that it specifically calls in the legislation for a Sanctuary Advisory Council, that's a group of stakeholders who could be involved in the planning and the management of an area, and it provides for more opportunity up front in designing a protected area.

*Jennifer Stock:* Excellent. What are the National Marine Monuments that we have? I'm only aware of one in the Northwest Hawaiian Islands. Are there others?

*Lauren Wenzel:* There are a couple of others in the Virgin Islands, the one in the Hawaiian Islands, the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument is the biggest National Monument of any kind in the entire United States and one of the biggest MPAs in the world, so it's a real standout, both in terms of its size and in terms of the pristine marine environment that it protects, in terms of coral reefs and the ecosystem in that remote area.

*Jennifer Stock:* Wonderful. Now you were just mentioning earlier these two - Marine Monument and National Marine Sanctuaries. These are definitely from two different authorities. But what are some of the other levels of conservation I should say, in terms of the terminology of the different types of MPAs. There's Reserves that are very prohibitive of not taking anything and then there's Marine Conservation Areas. Is there a threshold, a continuum of description to make one or the other?

*Lauren Wenzel:* Well, one of the challenges of talking about MPAs is that the level of protection doesn't really match up with the authorities. So you could be talking about a Marine Reserve, which is really just a description of a very highly protected area in the ocean, where extractive uses are not allowed, and the Marine Reserve could exist in a Sanctuary, it could exist in a Monument, it could exist in a National Park, or the State of California has created a type of MPA called a Marine Reserve. So you can understand why there's a little bit of confusion, because to say something is a Marine Reserve

tells you that you can't take anything out of it, but it doesn't tell you what agency is managing it.

*Jennifer Stock:* What do you think is the most important thing for those of us that are not tuned into the fine details here to keep in mind in regards to Marine Protected Areas?

*Lauren Wenzel:* That's a great question. I think one of the most important things is that a lot of times people think that Marine Protected Area means that you can't go there and you can't fish there, and you can't enjoy the place, and that is not true. Based on our work, we've found that less than 3% of US waters are off-limits to extractive uses, which means that almost all the waters in protected areas are available for people to go and enjoy and use, and that's of course what helps people really value and enjoy the ocean, is being able to get out there and take advantage of it. So I want to really leave that with your listeners, that Marine Protected Areas are a place for us to all go and enjoy what the ocean has to offer.

*Jennifer Stock:* Thank you so much! IS there a website that you can direct listeners to for more information about this center?

*Lauren Wenzel:* yeah, I would really encourage people to go to [mpa.gov](http://mpa.gov) and in the upper left hand corner, you'll see a tab that says "About MPAs" and that is a great place to start.

*Jennifer Stock:* Fantastic! Lauren, thank you so much for calling in for a quick overview of the US Marine Protected Areas and the National Marine Protected Areas Center, and I hope you have a great afternoon.

*Lauren Wenzel:* And thanks so much for inviting me.

*Jennifer Stock:* All right, take care.

*Lauren Wenzel:* Bye bye.

*Jennifer Stock:* All right, a quick overview. There are a lot of different levels of authority and conservation involved. I think the main thing is just to stay tuned to what is going on in your neck of the woods.

Up next, we're going to do that. We're going to talk with Dan Howard and find out what's happening with our most local National Marine Sanctuaries here on the coast. There's a process in place and we're going to talk about it. So stay tuned. We'll be right back with that.

## Music

*Jennifer Stock:* All right, you're listening to Ocean Currents. My name's Jennifer Stock, and we're talking a little bit about the Marine Protected Areas in our nation, but most locally here we're going to focus now on the Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries that we have right along our coast that are making a move up the coast, starting a public process. And with me in the studio here, I have Dan Howard, the Sanctuary Superintendent for Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, and full disclosure, this is my boss that I'm interviewing here in the station.

Welcome Dan!

*Dan Howard:* Thanks very much Jenny. No hard questions!

*Jennifer Stock:* All right, I'll do my best. For those of you that are tuning in, right before Christmas there's a big announcement about starting a public process to expand the Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries up the coast of Point Arena. So Dan this has been an effort that has been discussed for quite a number of years. Can you give us a brief history on it?

*Dan Howard:* Yeah, sure Jenny. There's been several different efforts, which is why it's been so confusing for folks. First of all, the Sanctuary program in 2001 initiated a process to review our Master Plan, which finally concluded in 2008, and one of the recommendations in that management plan was to consider boundary expansion and to look at our existing Sanctuaries, and to evaluate whether they were doing the job they needed to do to conserve or protect resources in this area. So that was the Marine Sanctuary effort.

And in 2004, due to the public's interest in expanding Sanctuary boundaries, Lynne Woolsey, our local Congresswoman, who just retired, initiated some legislation trying to go through Congress legislatively to expand the Sanctuary boundaries. And Lynne introduced legislation in each Congress since 2004, until she retired in January, to expand the Sanctuary up to Alder Creek in Southern Mendocino County. That would be for the Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank to expand slightly north and to the west, which would protect the Bodega Canyon area. So there are a couple different efforts that were kind of ongoing.

And so on December 20th of last year, NOAA announced that we were going to initiate a public process to review the boundaries for

Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary.

*Jennifer Stock:* This area is just a wild part of the coast, and I know that you spent a lot of time up there prior to your career with the National Marine Sanctuaries, when you were with the National Marine Fisheries Service. Can you describe this area biologically a little bit, and how is it connected to this ecosystem down here?

*Dan Howard:* Yes, as some of your listeners may know, the Sonoma and Southern Mendocino coast is a spectacular area. Part of the reason for the proposed boundary that Congresswoman Woolsey put forward was based on working with local experts and understanding that the Point Arena upwelling center is one of the strongest upwelling centers in North America. And what that does is fuel all of those areas downstream, which includes Cordell Bank and Gulf of the Farallones with nutrients from that upwelling center. So the scientific justification for protecting this area between the current Sanctuaries and the Point Arena upwelling center is to protect the source waters of Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, as well as that spectacular coastline along the Sonoma and Southern Mendocino coastlines.

*Jennifer Stock:* It also brings in a new habitat along the coast in the kelp areas. We don't have too much of this down here in the Gulf of Farallones area. The *Nereocystis*, the Bull Kelp forest...

*Dan Howard:* Yeah, which is a spectacular near shore habitat. Starting really north of Fort Ross, where you start to see the huge, huge beds of Bull Kelp, and with that, you get a lot of direct activity: kayakers, people playing in the water, which other than the local beaches, not so much, south of Bodega, let's say. So it really does, in terms of Sanctuaries, bring in a whole new environment.

*Jennifer Stock:* It's exciting! So, what are the main conservation benefits to designating this region as a National Marine Sanctuary? Lynne was definitely very, very interested in bringing this up the coast. What are the main benefits?

*Dan Howard:* Well I think a lot of that will come out in the public scoping process. We'll have three meetings initially and maybe we can get to the places and times later on. But it's during that scoping process we'll work with local communities and ask them, "Are there issues that we need to be aware of?" Initially with the boundary expansion, the way we're thinking right now, if that were to occur,

we would extend existing Sanctuary regulations into the expanded area, at least initially. And for Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank, this would be prohibition on oil and gas development, we have certain regulations that prohibit discharge into the Sanctuaries of different kinds of pollutants, seabed disturbance regulations... So all of these go towards maintaining a healthy and productive ecosystem.

*Jennifer Stock:* Now the State of California just completed a process of putting in a different network of marine protected areas near the coast. Those are, that's part of the State Marine Life Protection Act. Do you think there's going to be any confusion in the communities about what we're doing and what the State Marine Life Protection Act has done?

*Dan Howard:* Yeah, I think that's going to be one of our tasks, and certainly during the scoping meetings, the first part of the meeting is our opportunity to explain to those folks that show up kind of what Sanctuaries are, what we do, and who we are. Because there is a lot of confusion, and I think those that listen to Lauren's description prior to me coming on, it really is kind of confusing for the public - keeping track of kind of who, what, where, when and how.

The State process was different from the Marine Sanctuary process. They're two different managing agencies with slightly different missions, and Sanctuary program has worked very closely with the State in the Central and the Southern and the Northern section of their Marine Life Protection Act, so we've worked together, and we understand each other, but they're two very different processes, and that will be one of the things that we try to accomplish during the scoping meetings is to differentiate between kind of what Sanctuaries are and from the State process, the Marine Life Protection Act and the establishment of the different Marine Protected Areas, the network along the coast of California.

*Jennifer Stock:* Great. So tell me about the public process. What does this entail? Is this only for the locals that attend the meeting, or can people outside the area comment as well?

*Dan Howard:* We encourage everybody to come who has an interest in the marine environment. We will be holding the three scoping meetings in coastal communities that are most directly affected by Sanctuary designation. But that's just the start of the process. There's a sixty day comment period, where people can comment electronically, or via snail mail, or attend one of the three scoping



meetings, and give their comments orally, which will be recorded. The first meeting that we're going to have is in Bodega Bay, and that will be on January 24th. Then we're going to move up to Point Arena on February 12th, and then the next night in Gualala at the Community Center on February the 13th.

And the dates, times, website where you can comment and mailing address are all on our website. I think that's probably the easiest way, rather than try to keep track of it right now. So if listeners want to go to [cordellbank.noaa.gov](http://cordellbank.noaa.gov), we have a link on our page that will take you to the Gulf of the Farallones web page, where we put all the information - just trying to consolidate it - which is [farallones.noaa.gov](http://farallones.noaa.gov). And all of this information is there for folks to check out.

*Jennifer Stock:*

Excellent, it's all on one spot. So people can comment either at a public scoping meeting, or they can comment online, and both the information for those scoping meetings and the online option are all available at either the Cordell Bank or Farallones.noaa.gov websites.

How about the Sanctuary Advisory Council? How are they involved? This is a group of volunteers that represent different constituencies that are working with together with the Sanctuary. How will the Sanctuary Advisory Council be involved?

*Dan Howard:*

Well, the representatives that sit on our Sanctuary Advisory Council have seats that represent all different constituents that use the Sanctuary. Now certainly NOAA was very supportive of Congresswoman Woolsey's legislation that she was trying to introduce all those years, and in fact on two different occasions, our Advisory Council wrote letters supporting Lynne Woolsey and her legislation. So as we move through the scoping process, I imagine that our Advisory Council members will be attending the scoping meetings, and certainly at our Advisory Council meetings, which are open to the public, we will probably be discussing boundary expansion and the comments that were received, and certainly invite any of the public who would be interested in that on attending. Every other Council meeting we have out here in West Marin at the Red Barn.

*Jennifer Stock:*

One of the things that come up from time to time is the stretch of the geographic area and could this potentially become its own National Marine Sanctuary in the future? It seems like Gulf of the Farallones is kind of centered down here and getting all the way up

here could be a big extension. Is that one of the things that's open for discussion?

*Dan Howard:*

It's all open for discussion right now. During this scoping process, and certainly that is one possibility. What would probably happen would be at our next management plan review, where those kind of things come up, but certainly, if a member of the public wanted to attend a scoping meeting or submit a comment via email and make that recommendation, you know, that they feel that this really should be its own National Marine Sanctuary, that would certainly be something that we would consider because, yeah, I agree - it's difficult for those folks in the Point Arena and Gualala to think of themselves as maybe a San Francisco-based Sanctuary.

*Jennifer Stock:*

Yeah. Now Cordell Bank would get a little bit further. Cordell Bank is currently completely offshore, just west of Gulf of the Farallones, and the proposal is to go just a little bit north and encompass Bodega Canyon. You had the opportunity to explore Bodega Canyon a little bit, I think two years ago now. Do we know much about the habitat down below? We know it's a really rich upwelling area, but what about down below on the sea floor?

*Dan Howard:*

Yeah, I did have that opportunity, both in 2010 and 2011 and in my prior life that you referred to earlier, working with the Fisheries Service, we did a lot of work out at Bodega Canyon, and it's always been my feeling that Bodega Canyon is an integral part of the Cordell Bank ecosystem, if you will. Because of all the krill and other zooplankton that migrate out of that canyon every night and then are carried south by the prevailing current, and so that in two or three days, all those krill and other zooplankton are kind of delivered to Cordell Bank if you will. All those critters, the sessile invertebrates that live on the Bank are dependant on food delivery to their door, and certainly I think that Bodega Canyon is an integral part of the Cordell Bank system.

*Jennifer Stock:*

Interesting! That will be fun to see. I know we always go straight for Bodega Canyon when we're heading out for our field seminar to look for whales and sea birds and it is a hot spot on the surface as well with all that food.

Great! Any last comments about this exciting opportunity, or the year ahead with the Sanctuaries?

*Dan Howard:*

Well it certainly is going to be an exciting year for us. I think if the boundary expansion proposal moves forward, we're anticipating that this is going to be an 18-24 month process. There will be

several places along the way where we will encourage the public to get involved and to comment. Certainly the scoping meetings is the first opportunity and I invite everybody please to come out, give us your opinions, let us know what you think we should be doing, or should be considering. And all this information will go into development of a draft environmental impact statement, at which time there will be a second opportunity for the public to weigh-in. So certainly, keep an eye on our website. We have an outstanding Education Coordinator and Outreach person who keeps our website updated and current, and I would say that that would be the place to look to keep in touch with what's going on, and where we are and always feel free to give us a call on the phone. We're there and we'd love to talk to you.

*Jennifer Stock:*

Yeah, we're over in the Red Barn, right over by the Point Reyes National Seashore Headquarters.

Well we have a couple extra minutes. What are some other activities happening this year for Cordell Bank? Are you planning any other research efforts at the Cordell bank?

*Dan Howard:*

Um, yeah, if we can find time outside of our boundary expansion activities which are going to consume us. But no, we do have a couple of things on tap. One, we're hoping and striving to maintain our monitoring program that we have, we'll be entering into our 9th year with PRBO Conservation Science and Gulf of the Farallones, monitoring ocean productivity, krill, and ocean conditions along with sea birds and marine mammals. That's an ongoing. But in the Fall, it will be August or September, we're hoping to initiate a remotely operated vehicle, ROV cruise out to Cordell Bank, and one of the things that we've never done out there is characterize the invertebrate cover on the Bank, which is a phenomenal display of sponges and cold water corals and all different types of invertebrates. We spend a lot of time working on fishes and habitat, but never quantitatively tried to assess the invertebrate cover on the Bank. SO that's going to be our goal in the Fall of 2013 is to get out there and weather-permitting, spend 4 or 5 days looking at some different areas on the Bank and characterizing the invertebrate cover on the Bank.

*Jennifer Stock:*

Awesome. If people want to see what that invertebrate cover looks like, at least in the high reef areas, the Oakland Museum of California will be reopening in Early June, I believe the first weekend of June, and there is a big exhibit there about Cordell Bank in the new natural sciences gallery, so I will definitely keep you posted about that. They did a beautiful, beautiful recreation of

some of the high reaches of the Bank in that exhibit. So that's another exciting thing I'm looking forward to this year, is opening the doors to that exhibit.

*Dan Howard:* Yeah!

*Jennifer Stock:* Well Dan, thank you so much for coming in today to the studio.

*Dan Howard:* My pleasure. Happy New Year.

*Jennifer Stock:* Happy New Year. We'll be back in just a few minutes. We're going to talk with Shannon Lyddae a little bit. We're going to take a quick break. Thanks for tuning into Ocean Currents. You're listening to KWMR Point Reyes Station and Bolinas.

Music

*Jennifer Stock:* Late last year we lost a great person, well known and deeply respected in the natural world community. Rich Stallcup passed away December 15th. It's left many of us deeply saddened and with deep gratitude and reflection on how much he has influenced so many people. I'd like to take some time today to highlight the contributions he made to our National Marine Sanctuaries, both Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank.

When I first came to the Sanctuary about 13 years ago, Rich was the second person I was told about, and immediately we were in touch. And I hadn't had the appreciation for sea birds that I should have at the time, but quickly was reeled in and was captivated and have been a big fan ever since, and very motivated to continue to learn more. Rich probably visited Cordell Bank waters more than anyone alive today. He's been going out to sea for years, and he made Cordell Bank known as a rare sea bird hotspot. He called it the Albatross Capital of the Top Half of the World, and brought attention to its unique properties in his writings and outings. His book, *Ocean Birds of the Near Shore Pacific* is truly one of my most important books on my bookshelf.

On top of million other accolades, he worked intimately with the staff and volunteers of the Farallones Marine Sanctuary Association and the Gulf of the Farallones Sanctuary for nearly 20 years. So on the phone with us, joining us today is Shannon Lyday. She's the former Beach Watch Manager at the Farallones Marine Sanctuary Association, and currently a graduate student propelled into this role as a graduate student, in part by her time with Rich.

Shannon, welcome! You're live on the air.

*Shannon Lyday:* Thank you!

*Jennifer Stock:* I really appreciate you taking some time to talk today. Rich was, I know, a very influential person in your life. Can you talk a little bit about his role with Beach Watch, and the program overall, and what he did with it.

*Shannon Lyday:* Sure. Beach Watch is a program of the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary; it's a volunteer monitoring program. And they have over a hundred volunteers that monitor beaches from Sonoma County down through San Mateo County. The program started back in 1993, and Rich Stallcup was involved with the program then. At the very beginning, he trained all of the volunteers in bird identification, either during their initial training, or also during continuing education bird walks. As well as the volunteers when they document dead birds on the beaches, they take photographs and Rich looked at every single photograph to verify the identification of the bird, as well as to provide age and sex if possible. So Rich's expertise really validated the program, and I think made the program reputable.

*Jennifer Stock:* Wonderful. And it's been a very important data set when there's been disturbances in the marine environment from oil spills or other events going on, so I know it's a very well respected program, and Rich's role is huge.

Tell me about your time with Rich, when you worked over at Beach Watch with the Sanctuary Association. What types of activities did you do together?

*Shannon Lyday:* Well, I was the manager of Beach Watch for seven years, and I met Rich right when I started back in 2003. When I first started the position, I had a unique opportunity of having Rich personally train me in bird identification. So once a month for my first couple years as the Beach Watch manager, I would meet him at Point Reyes and the two of us would drive around in this old Suburban to all of his favorite haunts in Point Reyes, looking at every bird species we came across. So right at the beginning of my career, I was able to spend a lot of time with him, and it's funny looking back, because I knew he was a bird guru, but I don't think I realized at the time how lucky I was to be trained by Rich, one on one.

*Jennifer Stock:*

That's great. I know a lot of people would be so envious to have that time with him, so you're so, so lucky.

How did Rich influence you personally? You're now in graduate school pursuing an advanced degree, and you've said that he definitely helped influence you to some degree. How did that happen?

*Shannon Lyday:*

Yes, Rich definitely helped influence where I am today. He took me on my first pelagic birding trip, which was actually out to Cordell Bank, and his enthusiasm about sea birds was contagious. He always said that a pelagic bird never willingly comes to land except to breed, and I was really fascinated by that concept, that these birds spend their lives traversing the ocean, some traveling mind-blowing distances. And after that trip, I started spending as much time at sea as possible. I worked as a bird and marine observer for both Sanctuaries and PRBO Conservation Science throughout my years as the Beach Watch manager, and being out on the cruises really helped stimulate me when I decided to leave Beach Watch, to pursue a graduate degree.

So I'm currently finishing my Master's Degree in Marine Science at Hawaii Pacific University, and I'm using at-sea research cruise data to look at the abundance and distribution of shearwaters, a type of sea bird, along the entire West coast of North America, and their relationship to different oceanographic parameters. So I definitely think that spending that time with Rich and, him as well as the other people influenced the fact that now I'm studying sea birds in graduate school! It's really interesting to look back from when I first met him, to where I am today.

*Jennifer Stock:*

That's cool.

I'm sure you have many stories about time in the field with Rich. Do you have one special story that you can share?

*Shannon Lyday:*

Yeah, I think that probably one of my favorite things about Rich is that he's just never tired of teaching, even novice birders, and never above looking at the most common species. And I remember one time we were in Point Reyes and he put a shore bird in his scope and asked me what it was, and I was looking at this bird and racking my brain and I couldn't come up with an answer. And he said, it's a Willet, and I just felt so silly. I was sure it was something rare, or he would not be quizzing me, but as he would say throughout the years that we birded together, you've seen a Willet, but you've not seen this Willet. So I always laughed back at

that, that he would think of some of these birds that he sees, you know, he's seen tens of thousands, but he never tired of going out in nature and looking at everything that it had to offer. Not only birds, but also he was incredibly knowledgeable in reptiles, dragonflies, and wildflowers, and I just feel like he was a walking encyclopedia and he has a story for everything. I also loved when he was teaching in the field, a group of birders, that everybody would have their books open and be buried in the books and he would say, "Why don't you look at the bird!" He believed the bird, not the book.

*Jennifer Stock:*

Oh!

Well, one of the things that I liked about Rich is that when I got to go out on a couple of boat trips with him, he starts naturalizing from the moment that he hits the dock and is pointing things out right away, and it just pointed out to me to be present where we are, right now. You don't have to be at a destination to be observing and witnessing, it's right now, all the time we have this opportunity, and so it's a nice gift to remember that.

*Shannon Lyday:*

Yeah, he never, I mean I remember on bird walks, even at our lunch break, everybody else would sit down and catch up and he never sat down. He would have a sandwich in one hand and his binoculars in the other. He never tired of seeing what was out there.

*Jennifer Stock:*

So Rich was an all-around lover of nature, but also a great teacher, a leader, a friend, a photographer and a writer. And you have a poem that he wrote that you can share with us, and I'm wondering if you can take a moment here to read it here on the air, give us some background on how you got a hold of this poem.

*Shannon Lyday:*

Sure. Rich was definitely very eloquent. He wrote every month Bird Notes for the Beach Watch volunteers, and it was never cut and dry how he described birds and their natural history was very poetic, and I knew that he has different writings, but actually after I told him that I was leaving for graduate school, he brought in a copy of this poem for me and he wrote it back in 1979, and it's about storm petrels, which are the smallest of all the sea birds and they're found throughout the world's oceans. And the title of the poem is Storm Petrel in Spanish, which is La Golodrina de la Tempistad.

So the poem goes like this:

Shadowy night birds of the High Seas  
Bat-winged, plankton-fed, fearless gnomes of ocean troughs  
all colorless  
save black and gray  
all tippy toes  
on roughest roaring seas  
furry-feathered, burrow nesting  
soft as earthen moles  
yet coarse as stiffest monsoon wind  
what tales you sing of ships and fathoms mysteries?  
silent only to the ears of men  
  
smallest birds of open sea at peace  
with all your feathered brothers  
you find your way o'er countless miles  
of trailless, trackless sea  
leaning on gravity, flowing with the earth's rotation wind  
listening to the sound of water on water and charting  
stars beyond the means of the finest sextant  
you find your way  
beyond the grasp of minds and men

*Jennifer Stock:*

That's a beautiful, beautiful poem. Thank you so much for reading that!



*Shannon Lyday:* Yeah, definitely. I'm glad that I can share.

*Jennifer Stock:* Well, I know there are lots of people sharing wonderful stories about Rich, and I thought I would just direct folks that would like to learn more about his incredible life and contributions by visiting [www.prbo.org](http://www.prbo.org). Rich was one of the founders of PRBO and I know that they are recording all of this, and you can visit that website to read and also to leave your own memory.

Shannon, thank you for joining us today, and good luck finishing up your thesis.

*Shannon Lyday:* Thank you for having me.

*Jennifer Stock:* Take care and have a great New Year.

*Shannon Lyday:* You too.

*Jennifer Stock:* It's tough to talk about this all in the past tense, but I know there is so much wonderful life that has been stimulated and so much wonderful observation through Rich, so we really greatly thank you Rich, for everything you've given us.

(Music)

*Jennifer Stock:* Thank you for listening to Ocean Currents. This show is brought to you by NOAA's Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary on West Marin Community Radio, KWMR. Views expressed by guests on this program may or may not be that of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and are meant to be educational in nature. To learn more about Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, go to [cordellbank.noaa.gov](http://cordellbank.noaa.gov)

Whale Song, sung by Linn Walsh lyrics based on Herman Melville's Moby Dick